APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/912,511	07/26/2001	Chung-Wang Lee	LEEC3046/EM/7041	6293

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EXAMINER
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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2145	

DATE MAILED: 11/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>26 July 2001</u>.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-12* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on <u>26 July 2001</u> is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) *

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☒ Other: *see attached office action*.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

2.   Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito et al.

(6,523,696) in view of Thomas (6,498,939).

3.   For claim 1, Saito teaches (abstract) an information home appliance system (col. 1, line

10 – col. 9, line 30) comprising:

  a.   At least one information home appliance (Fig. 7, #208-213); and

  b.   A center controller (Fig. 7, #205) connected to a network (Fig. 7, #202), wherein:

    i.   When started, said center controller automatically receives and detects

    output signal of each of said at least one information home appliance (Fig. 9), and

    then registers the connection of said at least one information home appliance to

    said network and regularly inquires the condition of said at least one information

    home appliance (col. 21, line 1 – col. 22, line 50);

    ii.   When received a packet message from said network (Fig. 13), said center

    controller immediately sends the packet message to each of said at least one

    information home appliance by broadcast (col. 22, line 50 – col. 23, line 25);

    iii.   Upon receipt of a packet message signal from said center controller, the

    communications circuit of each of said at least one information home appliance

demodulates the packet message signal, and judges if the signal matches or not,

and then proceeds with the required control processing subject to the control

instruction of the packet message signal if the signal matches (Fig. 22).

4.   Saito does not expressly disclose that the system is wireless, and that the at least one

information home appliance and center controller each comprise a wireless I/O (input/output)

circuit. Thomas teaches a system (abstract) of a wireless home appliance system (col. 1, line 1 –

col. 6, line 67) in which the home appliance and central server communicate wirelessly (Fig. 1).

At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used Thomas to

develop a method for replacing Saito's wired connections with wireless antennas in order to set

up a home network without the need of complicated and/or unsightly cable networks (col. 1, line

3 – col. 1, line 40).

5.   For claim 2, Saito teaches that said central controller, when started, proceeds with the

steps of:

a.   Automatically receiving and detecting output signal communications circuit of

each of said at least one information home appliance (Fig. 18);

b.   Judging if the signal received came from a new information home appliance or

not (Fig. 46, #S5102);

c.   Registering the PIN (personal identification number) code of the information

home appliance in a memory thereof for further recognition use (Fig. 19); and

d.   Returning to step (a) if the information home appliance under detection is newly

installed (Figs. 45 – 50).

6.   For claim 3, Saito does not expressly disclose that if the information home appliance

under detection is not a new one, said center controller keeps inquiring the current condition of

every registered information home appliance, and then judging if said at least one information

home appliance have reaction or not subject to their response signal, and then recording the PIN

code of the information home appliance having no reaction so as not to make any further inquiry

if the inquired information home appliance has no reaction, and then returns to step (a). Thomas

teaches these limitations (col. 5, lines 35-55; col. 6, lines 15-40). At the time the invention was

made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have added periodic checks to Saito in order to

handle problems with a device, such as communications system degradation (col. 6, line 34).

7.   For claim 4, Saito teaches that at least one information home appliance each further

comprises a control circuit adapted to control every component part of the respective information

home appliance (Figs. 20-21), and an interface connected to the respective communication

circuit for receiving and transmitting signal through the respective wireless I/O circuit (Fig. 22).

Saito does not expressly disclose that the communications circuit is a wireless I/O circuit.

Thomas teaches this limitation (col. 4, line 60 – col. 5, line 3). At the time the invention was

made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used Thomas in order to set up a home network

without the need of complicated and/or unsightly cable networks (col. 1, line 3 – col. 1, line 40).

8.   For claim 5, Saito does not expressly disclose the configuration of the wireless I/O

circuit. Thomas teaches that the wireless I/O circuit of each of said at least one information

home appliance (Fig. 2) comprises:

        e. A wireless transmitter-receiver module (Fig. 2, #58); and

   f.   A CPU (central processing unit) (Fig. 2, #10) connected to the wireless transmitter-

receiver module of the respective wireless I/O circuit (Fig. 2, #404) and the interface of

the respective information home appliance respectively (Fig. 2, #506 and #508) and

      i.   Adapted to receive signal from the control circuit of the respective

      information home appliance and transmit received signal to the wireless

      transmitter-receiver module of the respective wireless I/O circuit for transmission

      to said central controller (col. 7, line 60 – col. 8, line 17); and

      ii.   To transmit control signal received by the wireless transmitter-receiver

      module of the respective wireless I/O circuit through the respective interface to

      the control circuit of the respective information home appliance to drive the

      control circuit to control the component parts of the respective information home

      appliance (col. 8, lines 17-25).

9.   At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used

Thomas in order to set up a home network without the need of complicated and/or unsightly

cable networks (col. 1, line 3 – col. 1, line 40).

10.   For claim 6, Saito teaches that said center controller further comprises a network

interface connected to said network (Fig. 8, #223) for receiving packet message signal from a

remote side at said network and transmitting signal to electronic apparatus means at a remote

side of said network (col. 19, line 40 – col. 20, line 67).

11.   Claim 7 is drawn to the limitations in claim 5, but for the central controller, which

Thomas also teaches (Fig. 1, #3). Therefore, since claim 5 is rejected, claim 7 is also rejected for

the reasons above.

12.   For claim 8, Saito teaches that the CPU of the communications circuit of one of said at least one information home appliance recognizes received signal not for controlling the respective information home appliance, the CPU of the communications circuit of the respective information home appliance gives up the packet message (Fig. 23, #228).

13.   Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saito and Thomas as applied to claims 1, 5, 7 above, and further in view of Plasson et al. (6,795,688).

14.   For claim 9, Saito and Thomas do not expressly disclose that the wireless transmitter-receiver module is an infrared transmitter-receiver module. Plasson teaches this limitation (col. 1, line 35). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used the wireless technology in order to support the interaction, collaboration, and cooperation among the member devices (col. 1, lines 30-35).

15.   For claim 11, Saito and Thomas do not expressly disclose that the wireless transmitter-receiver module is constructed subject to bluetooth communication protocol. Plasson teaches this limitation (col. 1, line 35). At the time the invention was made, one of ordinary skill in the art would have used the wireless technology in order to support the interaction, collaboration, and cooperation among the member devices (col. 1, lines 30-35).

16.   Claims 10 and 12 are drawn to the limitations in claims 9 and 11, respectively. Therefore, since claims 9 and 11 are rejected, claims 10 and 12 are also rejected for the reasons above.

Conclusion

17.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's
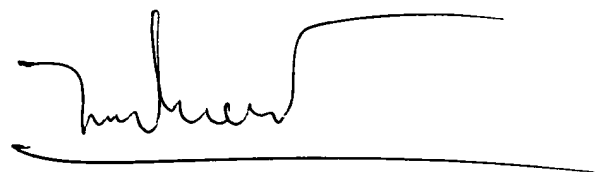
disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Melvin H Pollack whose telephone number is (571) 272-3887.

The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Rupal Dharia can be reached on (571) 272-3880. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MHP
12 November 2004

LE HIEN LUU
PRIMARY EXAMINER